

# Curecanti

National Recreation Area  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

## Hiking

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Curecanti National Recreation Area offers the hiker diversity in habitat, scenic vistas, wildlife and wildflowers. Interpretive signs help visitors understand the rich natural and cultural history of this area.



### Neversink

1.5 miles/2.5 km    .5 to 1 hour    Easy

Located on the north shore of the Gunnison River near a Great Blue Heron rookery, this streamside habitat with heavy undergrowth of grasses, flowers, cottonwoods and willows, is ideal for birding, wildlife observation and fishing. Located off highway 50, 5 miles west of Gunnison.

### Curecanti Creek

4 miles/6.6 km    2 to 3 hours    Strenuous

After descending from the rim of the upper Black Canyon of the Gunnison, the trail follows the banks of Curecanti Creek to Morrow Point Lake. The Curecanti Needle, a 700 foot granite spire, is within view at the trail's end. Two campsites are provided at end of trail. Elevation change of 900 feet. Located off highway 92 at Pioneer Point, 5.7 miles from junction with highway 50.





## Hermit's Rest

6 miles/10 km    3 hours    Strenuous  
Zigzagging through oak, pine, juniper and fir, hikers descend to the wooded camp and shores of Morrow Point Lake. Elevation change of 1800 feet. Located off highway 92, 17 miles from junction with highway 50.

## Crystal Creek

5 miles/9 km    2 hours    Moderate  
Winding through abundant wildflowers, oak brush, aspen, conifers and a recovering burned area, hikers are rewarded with sweeping ridge top views of Cimarron Valley, the West Elk and San Juan Mountains. The trail ends at an overlook, 1800 feet above Crystal Lake. Located off highway 92, 24 miles from junction with highway 50.



## Pine Creek

2 miles/3.3 km    1 to 1.5 hours    Moderate  
Descends along Pine Creek, on the south side of the Black Canyon to the Gunnison River below Blue Mesa Dam. This popular trail's lower portion follows the old bed of the Denver and Rio Grande, and interpretive signs tell the story of the narrow gauge railroad. Elevation change of 180 feet via 232 steps. Access to fishing, boating and camping for Morrow Point Lake. No boat launching facilities. Small craft must be hand-carried down (and back up) the trail. Access to Morrow Point Lake Boat Tours. Parking space is limited, drop-off parking for trailers available at top of access road. A short, steep road leads to trailhead. Located off highway 50, one mile west of junction with highway 92.





## Mesa Creek

1.5 miles/2.5 km    1 hour    Moderate  
The sheer walls and extreme narrowness of the Black Canyon are well appreciated along this trail. Provides access to fishing and boating on Crystal Lake. A footbridge over the lake allows access to the north shore. No boat launching facilities. Small craft must be hand launched. Releases from Morrow Point Dam can cause strong currents and fluctuating water levels. Located off highway 50 at Cimarron. Drive one mile to Morrow Point Dam parking area.

## Dillon Pinnacles

4 miles/6.7 km    2 to 3 hours    Moderate  
Ascending through sagebrush, conifers and riparian vegetation, this trail offers spectacular views of the Dillon Pinnacles, wierdly eroded volcanic formations. Interpretive signs explain the geologic history. Horses permitted. Located off highway 50, 6 miles west of the Elk Creek Visitor Center.



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## Do's and Don'ts

These trails are located at elevations of approximately 7300 to 8900 feet above sea level. Hiking can be difficult if one is not accustomed to the high altitude.

Ticks which may carry Colorado Tick Fever or Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever are active from April to August. Check yourself frequently and remove ticks immediately. The use of insect repellent will also aid in keeping ticks from your clothing and skin.

All-terrain bikes and motorized vehicles are prohibited on hiking trails. Dogs permitted on leash only.

Boil all drinking water.

Check with a ranger for possible seasonal hazards on trails. See Curecanti National Recreation Area map for trail locations.